(b) whether meeting also discussed programmes related to disinvestment in some other PSUs like Shipping Corporation of India;

(c) if so, the decision taken;

(d) whether Government have gone to the Supreme Court to review its order on investment of PSUs;

(e) whether in view of this, Government are considering to consult all national parties to discuss this issue; and

(f) if so, whether any legislation is being considered for disinvestment of PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) to (f) Government, as a part of its reply to the Special Leave Petition (SLP) filed against the disinvestment of Jessop & Co. Ltd., has raised before the Supreme Court issues arising out of its judgment on HPCL & BPCL. The case came up for hearing in the Supreme Court on 17.11.2003. The Petitioners were given time of four weeks to file their rejoinder, if any, on the counter affidavit filed by the Union of India in the SLP. Government has also filed a Transfer Petition for transferring some of the cases filed against the disinvestment of Shipping Corporation of India (SCI), Burn Standard Company Ltd. (BSCL) and Hindustan Copper Ltd. (HCL) to the Supreme Court so that the issues raised in those petitions are decided by the Apex Court.

Economic Cooperation with ASEAN

257. DR. AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of the Prime Minister to Bali, India and the ten members ASEAN signed three major agreements on fighting terrorism and enhancing economic cooperation during the Summit;

(b) if so, whether besides cooperation in combating terrorism it represented a precursor to a free trade arrangement and India's accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with South East Asia; and

(c) the details of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes sir, during the visit of the Prime Minister to Bali, India, signed/adopted the following documents with the ASEAN countries:

(i) the ***Frame work Agreement for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation*** signed by leaders of the ASEAN and India,

(ii) the accession document to the ***ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation, signed by the Minister of External Affairs, and***

(iii) adoption of the ***Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism.***

(b) and (c) The Framework Agreement envisages the establishment of an Indo-ASEAN Regional Trade and Investment Area, which includes a Free Trade Area in goods, services and investment. Negotiations on the Free Trade Area in goods are expected to commence in January 2004 and be completed by June 2005. The negotiated FTA would come into force from January 2006. Tariff reduction/elimination will be completed by December 2011 between Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand and India. Tariff reduction/elimination between the Philippines and India will commence on January 2006 and be completed by December 2016. Tariff reduction/elimination between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam (CLMV countries) and India would commence from January 2006, to be completed by the CLMV countries by December 2016 and by India by December 2011.

2. For trade in services and investments, the negotiations on the respective agreements shall commence in 2005 and be concluded by 2007.

3. The Framework Agreement includes an Early Harvest Programme (EHP) on trade in goods under which progressive tariff reduction on 105 agreed items shall commence from November 2004. Tariff elimination/ reduction shall be completed by Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and India by October 2007, and by Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam by October 2010. In addition, India has also given unilateral tariff-concessions to Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam on 111 items.

4. The Agreement provides the roadmap for negotiating a Free Trade Area Agreement with the ASEAN. An ASEAN-India Trade Negotiating Committee shall be established to carry out the programme of negotiations. This would give further impetus to India-ASEAN linkages in trade, investment, services and other areas of economic cooperation, and would facilitate a closer economic partnership between India and ASEAN in the 21st century.

5. The ***Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism*** envisages cooperation in (i) exchange of information, (ii) legal and enforcement matters, (iii) institutional capacity augmentation, and (iv) training.

6. India's accession to the ***Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia*** signifies India's commitment to work with the ASEAN countries in maintaining regional peace and stability.

Disruption of Diwali Celebration in London

258. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that two Britons were engaged in criminal acts by disrupting Diwali celebrations at the Ram Temple in Ealing Road, London where the local Police have charged them under Section 28 of the Criminal and Disorder Act of 1998;

(b) whether Indian High Commission in London is following up this case so that culprits are punished; and

(c) if so, the status of the case and whether Government propose to pursue the matter with Home Department of UK to avoid recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Government is aware of a criminal incident by two British nationals which disrupted the Diwali celebrations at the Ealing Road Sanatan Mandir in London on 25th October 2003. Both have been sentenced for the crime.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) Concerns relating to the Indian community in the UK are taken up by our High Commission in London with the relevant British authorities as and when necessary.